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GREAT NEWES FROM THE Barbadoes.

OR,

A True and Faithful ACCOUNT OF THE

Grand Conſpiracy

OF

The *Negroes* againſt the *Engliſh*.

AND

The Happy Diſcovery of the ſame.

WITH

The number of thoſe that were burned alive, Beheaded, and otherwiſe Executed for their Horrid Crimes.

With a ſhort Diſcription of that PLANTATION.

With Allowance.

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JOHN CARTER BROWN

A DISCRIPTION OF Barbadoes.

BEfore we proceed to the Particulars of that Conſpiracy, which had like in one Moment to have defaced the moſt Flouriſhing Colony the *Engliſh* have in the World, it will not be amiſs a little to conſider the Nature, Situation, and Commodities of the Place; not that we ſhall trouble the Reader with a Hiſtory of the Iſland, that being needleſs, Eſpecially to ſuch as have ever read Ingenious Mr. *Ligon* on that ſubject; whoſe flouriſhes in Rhetorick, though in ſome things Poetical, yet in the main do keep ſuch a Chain of truth, that the Romantick part rather guilds then diſlincks the Hiſtory. My

own Experience of *Barbadoes*, in a time when it had Received the most Improvement it was Capable of, (which was not long before the discovery of this Almost Fatal Plot; will not however suffer me to go further in my Praises of it than he did (as I may almost say by Prophecy): for Mr. *Ligon* happened to be there in a time when all or most upon the Island did not more sweat by occasion of the heat, than they did for the bare necessities of life; few of those many great Estates, that are now there, being then in any other Essence then in Prospect: Nor was there then any Houses which could boast a Grandeur much more considerable than those, most of our Villages are composed of: So that indeed he saw little more to praise then that much Celebrated perpetual Verdure that Adorns the several Native Trees of that warm World.

Nor can indeed too much Commendation be given to that Pleasant Prospect, which salutes a Stranger's Eye as he sayles along the Shoar to *Carlisle* Bay, the Chief Road for Ships in the Island, secured from Forraign Invasion by a Fort-Royal strongly built of Stone, and situated in the Easternmost Point of Land that Compasses that Bay, in which there is constantly mounted 40 Guns, whose warm Mouths spoke Terrour to *De Ruyter* in his Attempt on that Island in the Year 1664. At the Bottom of this Bay stands the Bridge-Town, which hath twice since its first building been reduced almost to nothing by Fire; yet thereby hath not so warned the Inhabi-

Inhabitants, but that for haſt and want of Conſide-ration it hath again been rebuilt without that Exact Order in the Houſes and Streets that might ſecure it from having that dangerous Element ſo totally pre-vail the third time. And ſhould it do ſo, (which God forbid) it would level many Coſtly and Stately Hou-ſes which Compoſe amongſt many other little ones, that Popular though ſomething Confuſed Town; which was it but contriv'd for proper Receits of the Breeſe through its Streets for letting in through Venteducts the Wind into their houſes, would be much more pleaſant to live in the heat; As it is now built, being to Strangers at their firſt coming there ſcarce tolerable. For this Iſland which lyes betwixt 13 and 14 degrees of North Latitude, muſt needs have the Sun twice a year in its Zenith, the Inhabi-tants ſeeing him againſt their will make his Progreſs over their heads as he goes and returns in his Viſit to the Tropick of *Cancer*; ſo that for ſome Moneths being on the North ſide of them; And when fur-theſt off, not ſo far as to vary the length of their days and Nights one hour, the Country muſt of neceſſity be exceeding hot: Nor would it be more habitable then the Ancients believe the Torrid Zone to be (within in which Circle this Iſland ſtands) were it not for the Refreſhing Gales that for ever from ſome Quarter of the Eaſt Fans Cool, and conſequently refreſh the Inhabitants of this Flouriſhing Iſland. Nor is the Conveniency from the Wind only this, but perhaps the Inhabitants owe to it All or the grea-

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and the Winde work. And no doubt, let others gueſs what they pleaſe to be the Occaſion of the *Conſpiracy* I am treating of, It could have its hopes of Succeſs in the general from nothing but their deſire of being Eaſed from that Continual Work, which by being Slaves, they and their Poſterity are lyable to: for let ſome ſay what they pleaſe, I am of the Opinion, That no man labours but by neceſſity; Or hopes at laſt to gain that to live on which may give him reſt. Or whether it be my own Lazy Temper that prejudices me in the Point or no, I cannot tell: But I am ſure in my Converſing with them, or Inquiring into the Natures and Deſires of that People, I could never find they deſired any thing ſo much as to have time for Play.

But not to trouble our ſelves to gueſs, what ſhould Occaſion that, which no doubt beſides the former hath many Complicated Cauſes working in the different Perſons Engaged in it, we will without loſing more time in Commendation either of the Hoſpitality, or Number of the ſplendid Planters, who for Sumptuous Houſes, Cloaths and Liberal Entertainment cannot be Exceeded by this their Mother Kingdome it ſelf. Or in Reciting the Excellency of their Fruits, eſpecially the Pine ſo much Celebrated by more learned Pens: Or of the Prodigious Succeſs they have found in the Improvement of ſeveral newly introduced Fruits, eſpecially of that called *China Oranges*, the goodneſs of which exceeds any we have ever had from *Portugal.* But to leave thoſe, the Musk-

Melons,

Melons, Grapes, Figs, Prickle Pears, Guavers, Pomegranets, Citrons, Sour Sops, and ſweet Lemmons of a vaſt bigneſs, and delicate pleaſant taſte. And all Kitching Garden-Herbs, and Fruits (are much better and more fragrant then in *England*) that are there at almoſt all times of the year to be had in their Excellency. Beſides, there are Medicinal Plants, as Galingal, Colliquintida, Balſom *naturale*, Balſom with Balſamick, Tar, Gumaſtick, Gumallemna, Alloes, Guiacum, and ſeveral other Medicinal Herbs, and all other things of this kind.

I will now proceed to the Particular of my Story, wherein, if I have not ſo much Art as another might have done it with, yet ſhall you have no untruth mixt with the ſhort ſtory of it.

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THE Relation of a Conspiracy in the *BARBADOES.*

THis *Conspiracy* first broke out and was hatched by the *Carmantee* or *Gold-Coast Negro's* about Three years since, and afterwards Cunningly and Clandestinely carried, and kept secret, even from the knowledge of their own Wifes.

Their grand design was to choose them a King, one *Coffee* an Ancient Gold-Coast *Negro*, who should have been Crowned the 12th of *June* last past in a Chair of State exquisitely wrought and Carved after their Mode; with Bowes and Arrowes to be likewise carried in State before his Majesty their intended

tended King: Trumpets to be made of Elephants Teeth and Gourdes to be ſounded on ſeveral Hills, to give Notice of their general Riſing, with a full intention to fire the Sugar-Canes, and ſo run in and Cut their Maſters the Planters Throats in their reſpective Plantations whereunto they did belong.

Some affirm, they intended to ſpare the lives of the Faireſt and Handſomeſt Women (their Miſtreſſes and their Daughters) to be Converted to their own uſe. But ſome others affirm the contrary; and I am induced to believe they intended to Murther all the White People there, as well Men as Women: for *Anna* a houſe Negro Woman belonging to Juſtice *Hall*, over-hearing a Young *Cormantee Negro* about 18 years of age, and alſo belonging to Juſtice *Hall*, as he was working near the Garden, and diſcourſing with another *Cormantee Negro* working with him, told him boldly and plainly, *He would have no hand in killing the* Baccararoes *or White Folks; And that he would tell his Maſter.* All which the aforeſaid *Negro* Woman (being then accidentally in the Garden) over-heard, and called to him the aforeſaid Young *Negro* Man over the Pales, and enquired and asked of him *What it was they ſo earneſtly were talking about?* He anſwered and told her freely, *That it was a general Deſign amongſt them the* Cormantee Negro's, *to kill all the* Baccararoes *or White People in the Iſland within a fortnight.* Which ſhe no ſooner underſtood, but went immediately to her Maſter and Miſtris, and diſcovered

discovered the whole truth of what she heard, saying withal, *That it was great Pity so good people as her Master and Mistriss were, should be destroyed.* Which was the first discovery that I can learn came to the knowledge of the worthy Inhabitants of that Noble and most flourishing Island.

Afterwards the Discreet and Prudent Justice sent presently for the young *Negro* Man, who discovered and impeached several, as well his own Master's *Negro's* as others belonging to the adjacent Plantations who hand a hand in this Plot.

Of all which the said Justice sending the true Information to that Noble Person (now Governour there) Sir *Jonathan Atkins*, he with his Life-Guard presently came to the house of the aforesaid Justice *Hall*, and granted him and others Commissions to apprehend the guilty and impeached *Negroes*, with the Ring-leaders of this fatal Conspiracy; which in pursuance was put in Execution with much Celerity and Secrecy, that the Heads and Chief of these ungrateful wretches (who I have often heard confess to live better in Servitude there, then at Liberty in their own Native Country) were apprehended and brought to Tryal at a Court of *Oyer* and *Terminer* granted by the aforesaid Governour to a Dozen or more of the Colonels and Field-Officers as Judges of that Island; Who after strict and due Examination of the matter of Fact of their Conspiracy, at first Se-

venteen were found guilty and Executed, (*viz.*) Six burnt alive, and Eleven beheaded, their dead bodies being dragged through the Streets, at *Spikes* a pleasant Port-Town in that Island, and were afterwards burnt with those that were burned alive.

One of those that were burned alive being chained at the stake, was perswaded by that honest Gentleman Mr. *George Hanson*, the Deputy Provost-Marshall, *That since he was going to suffer death, Ingeniously to Confess the depth of their design.* The *Negro* calling for water to drink (which is a Custome they use before they tell or discover any thing) he just then going to speak and confess the truth of what he knew in this Matter; The next *Negro* Man chained to him (one *Tony*, a sturdy Rogue, a *Jew*'s *Negro*) jogged him, and was heard to Chide him in these words, *Thou Fool, are there not enough of our Country-men killed already? Art thou minded to kill them all?* Then the aforesaid *Negro* that was a going to make Confession, would not speak one word more.

Which the spectators observing, cryed out to *Tony*, *Sirrah, we shall see you fry bravely by and by.* Who answered undauntedly, *If you Roast me to day, you cannot Roast me to morrow:* (all those *Negros* having an opinion that after their death they go into their own Country) Five and Twenty more have been since Executed. The particulars of whose due Punishment are not yet come to my hands.

Five impeached Hanged themselves, because they would not stand Tryal.

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Threescore and odd more are in Custody at the *Hole*, a fine Haven and small Town in the said Island, and are not as yet brought to Tryal.

Thus escaped from Eminent dangers, this flourishing and Fertile Island, or to say more properly Spatious and profitable Garden, one of the chiefest of his Majesties Nurseries for Sea-men.

This little Spot imploying every year above 100 good Merchants Ships, to carry off its product, *viz.* Sugar, Ginger, Cotton, and Indigo; of which I have heard it affirmed, That that Earth and Rich soyl being so thinly placed on most part of the said Island, as not exceeding above half a foot in depth, the said product since its first manuring carried off in several years, much exceeds in bulk and weight the surface of the Island, it being only a Rock. So leaving to others the giving an account of the great plenty of fresh Fish there, though of different shapes and names from ours, which it exceeds in pleasantness and nourishment, especially the Turtles there caught, their admirable Pork, Poultry &c. Their Wood Pidgeons, Turtle-Doves of several kinds, wild Fowls, Plovers, Thrushes, Crabs, Lobsters, Prawns, and all other necessary and pleasant Provisions in abundance, both Fish and Flesh. But above all, admirable (considering it is so small an Island) is the Populousness thereof, for I have seen at a General Rendezvous in *Hethersals* Pasture 12000 well Armed fighting men, Horse and Foot, of the Train-Bands, besides *Negro's* that waited

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on their Maſters: And I have lately ſeen a liſt taken by Authority that amounts to above 80000 Souls. 'Tis fortified (beſides the ſtone Wall all along the places of moſt danger for Landing, near the Sea-ſide) with ſeveral ſtrong uniform Forts Alla-Modern, well mounted with ſtore of great Guns; ſo as conſidering the ſtrength, Riches, Pleaſant ſcituation, Populouſneſs and good Hoſpitality of thoſe Noble Gentlemen there now inhabiting, I conclude it to be the fineſt and worthieſt Iſland in the World.

FINIS.